

# PHOTOGRAPHY HISTORY

**Photography for Everyone.** In 1888, George Eastman, an American dry-plate manufacturer, revolutionized photography by marketing the Kodak camera. The Kodak was a simple snapshot camera that could be used by amateurs. It held a roll of film that made a hundred pictures. After a person had used up the film, he returned the camera with the film still inside to Eastman's company in Rochester, N.Y. The company developed the film and printed the pictures, and returned the camera with a new roll of film in it.

The first roll film consisted of light-sensitive gelatin coated onto a paper backing. After the film had been developed, the gelatin emulsion was transferred from the paper onto a piece of glass. Then prints were made. Transferring the emulsion was difficult, and required too much skill for amateur photographers.

In 1889, Eastman substituted a Celluloid base for the paper. Printing photographs became much easier because the gelatin emulsion did not have to be removed from the base. Persons who wished to develop and print their own pictures could buy processing kits. Other persons followed Eastman's slogan: "You press the button, we do the rest." Photography became an international hobby.

During the late 1800's and early 1900's, scientists made other improvements in the tools and processes of photography. They introduced the time-temperature method of developing film, which greatly simplified the development process. They improved camera lenses, developed a precision enlarger, and increased the light-sensitivity of film and printing papers.

In 1924, the Leica camera was marketed in Germany. This miniature camera takes 35-millimeter film, the size used in making motion pictures. Many persons used the camera to take *candid photographs* (pictures taken without the subject's knowledge). In 1929, the

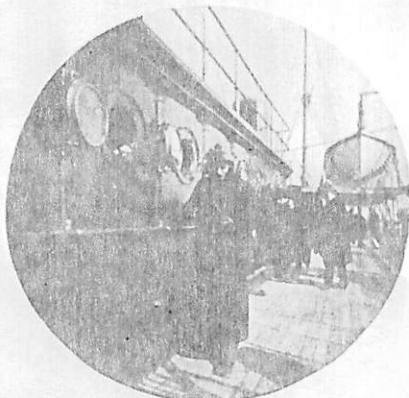
electric flashbulb was patented in Germany. Two years later, Harold E. Edgerton, an American engineer, developed electronic flash. Artificial lighting greatly increased the type of subjects that could be photographed.

As photography became more popular with amateurs, professional photographers advanced photography in new ways. A French photographer, Jean-Eugène Auguste Atget, took photographs of Paris showing the city's people and its historic buildings and statues. In the United States, Alfred Stieglitz worked to establish photography as a creative art. In 1902, he and some other photographers formed the Photo-Secession, a group active in promoting photography as an art form until about 1910. One member, Edward Steichen, organized "The Family of Man" picture exhibit at New York City's Museum of Modern Art in 1955. It was one of the most popular exhibits ever held.

László Moholy-Nagy, a Hungarian who moved to the United States, made abstract photographs called *photograms*. He placed objects on a piece of printing paper in the darkroom and exposed them with a flash light. The American photographers Paul Strand and Edward Weston took detailed close-up photographs. Among Strand's photographs are large details of machines. Weston revealed the beauty of such natural shapes as peppers and cabbages. Walker Evans and Dorothea Lange photographed poverty-stricken farmers in the South during the 1930's.

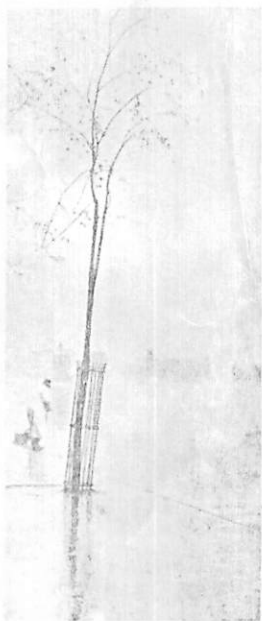
Henri Cartier-Bresson, a French photographer, used a miniature camera to capture "decisive moments" in people's lives. His success in recording fleeting events and emotions has greatly influenced photojournalism. Margaret Bourke-White, an American, also produced important works of photojournalism. Ansel Adams, also of the United States, specialized in photographing scenes of nature, especially the mountains and deserts of the West.

**Photography Today.** Cameras and photographic equipment are both becoming more and more auto-



George Eastman House

George Eastman holds one of the first Kodak cameras. The camera, identical with the one that took this picture in 1890, produced a hundred round negatives.



Courtesy of The Art Institute of Chicago, Alfred Stieglitz Collection

Alfred Stieglitz led the movement for creative photography in the early 1900's. He created the camera phere of "Spring Showers" in this 1902 photograph.

Edward Weston in his "Halved Cabbage" shows his style of emphasizing textures and sharp, clean lines.

